

CHAPTER 3

THE FIELD BOOK

Introduction

Field books contain valuable information which details and describes the layout, elevations, and quantities of features and material incorporated in a construction project. As such, they are part of the official and legal record of the work done. Field notes must be kept so that sufficient documentation of original data becomes a part of the permanent project record. A guide to the preparation of field notes is found in Chapter 30 of the Indiana Dept. of Transportation General Instructions to Field Employees. Some of the common mistakes in field note keeping may be eliminated by observing the following points:

Points to Consider While Note Keeping

- * The outside cover of the field book should always show "Contract Number, Project Number, Book Number, and the Contents of the Book."
- * The complete return address should be written on the front flyleaf.
- * Each book must have an index. Reserve the first few pages for this purpose. The index will vary according to the contents of the book and will be added to as the book is used.
- * Information blocks must include as a minimum the date, weather, and personnel performing the work.
- * Use a system of lettering which can be easily read and clearly understood. Avoid small lettering.
- * Use 3H pencil or lead that does not smear.
- * Always record information directly in the field book. Do not transcribe data from scraps of paper or matchbook covers.
- * Carry a combination scale/protractor.
- * Make sketches with proportions carefully estimated. With practice, it will become obvious that a scale and protractor help to produce sketches that are of a higher quality.
- * Exaggerate details on sketches.
- * Line up sketches with tabulated data.
- * Left hand pages for tabulation of numerical data and right hand pages for sketches.
- * Think what the man in the office needs to know and make explanatory notes so all data is clear.
- * Use conventional symbols.

- * Place north arrow at either the top or left side of the page for all sketches shown. Show by an arrow. Do not overpower sketch with the north arrow.
- * Keep tabulated figures lined up with the column rulings and digits and decimal points in line vertically.
- * Check all measurements and rod readings to quickly determine if they are reasonable.
- * Repeat aloud all values before recording for verification by person giving values or assisting.
- * Place a zero before all decimals if less than one.
- * Show precision of measurements by recording significant zeros.
- * Make computation checks in the field and record immediately.
- * Compute all closures and ratios of error before leaving the field.
- * Do not erase recorded data or write on top of it. Run a line through incorrect values and record the correct value near it.
- * If a page is voided, draw diagonal lines from opposite corners, and letter VOID, but do not obscure any information.

Summary

All field books should always contain the following data:

- Title
- Return Address
- Index
- Information concerning dates, weather, and personnel who performed the work.

Remember, DO NOT ERASE in the field books. If a mistake is made, neatly cross out the mistake and rewrite the proper data. ALWAYS provide a clear, descriptive sketch with references to known land marks or control points.